

Wilmington did not have such domination. Chadbourn also observed that the primary motivation for the Democratic campaign in the city was a desire among Democrats to regain control of political offices in the city. The letter was acquired by the press and was published in pro-Democratic Party papers such as the *Wilmington Messenger*, *Wilmington Evening Star*, and the *Raleigh News and Observer*. After pressure from Democrats, Chadbourn retracted his statement and decided that he was “for white supremacy.”⁸ After Chadbourn’s switch, the “Remember the Big Six” was changed to a “five” in the newspapers, and he was then “immune from the slaughter.”⁹ Rountree and other Democrats targeted another one of the six, Flavel Foster, during an hours-long late night visit in which they compelled him to sign a letter similar to Chadbourn’s second letter.¹⁰

⁸After the pressure from the Democrats and his capitulation, Chadbourn left the city to visit relatives in Maine and returned just before the election. In a jovial manner James Worth wrote his wife that Chadbourn and his family had “gone to Maine for his health.” Chadbourn’s conversion was so complete that he allowed his Democratic Party employees to use his horses and buggy on voter registration day, presumably to get as many people to registration sites as possible. *Contested Election Case*, 390; McDuffie, “Politics in Wilmington,” 630; James S. Worth to Josephine, November 4, 1898, James S. Worth Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

⁹ McDuffie, “Politics in Wilmington,” 605; *Contested Election Case*, 361.

¹⁰ Chief of Police Melton testified that Foster’s account was published as a letter in the paper on October 21, 1898, but that he didn’t believe that Foster authored the piece. The article, published with prominence in the *Messenger*, indicated that an unnamed reporter interviewed Foster “ascertaining his views upon the present condition of affairs in our city.” The article explained that Foster “recognized the fact that the situation here was extremely grave, with imminent danger of trouble between the races” and that “he believed the city would not recover from the ill effect of such a conflict in years to come.” Although Foster was portrayed as a staunch

Other Wilmington Republicans and Populists were also thoroughly intimidated by the Democrats. James Worth, a Democratic Party member and businessman, wrote his wife the week before the election to give her details on the city’s affairs since she left town. Worth said he spoke to several different Fusionists in the city and reported their replies to her. In almost a laundry list of Democratic Party targets, and written in language reflective of the larger campaign, Worth informed his wife about matters. He informed her that white George Lutterloh had changed his mind and had promised not to vote; African American Junius Murray and “his whole gang” didn’t register; and African American Jim Howe had promised not to vote, that his father and brother felt the same way, and that Howe claimed to be able to locate at least another 150 men “only too glad . . . not to vote.” Worth continued his account as he explained that George French planned to go to Maine after voting just as “Foster, Rice and the others were to leave on short notice.” Worth concluded his thoughts on the campaign as he claimed that “the small fry leaders such as Lockey and his gang were told that no ‘monkeying’ would be taken from such ‘small potatoes’ and that if he undertook to help the niggers or if he failed to support in every way Russell’s pledge that no second notice would be sent to him.” Worth observed that Lockey “came down at once like the cur that he is.” Simultaneously, a short note from A. J. Costin to Douglas

Republican, he was quoted as saying that “it would be best at this time for the Republicans not to put a county ticket in the field.” The author was hopeful that Foster’s standing within the Republican community would influence others and took care to explain Foster’s role as “one of our most public spirited citizens and no man here has been more earnestly interest in the up building and prosperity of our city.” *Wilmington Messenger*, October 21, 1898; *Contested Election Case*, 378; Rountree, “Memorandum.”